

Finished July 21<sup>st</sup> 1857 New

Dear Father & Mother,

Friday morning Dr Gray & I decided, after some deliberation to go first to the Mathematical section, where we were to see some papers he wished to hear. And then to go to the Natural History section - We heard there is meet Dr Brown, perhaps Dr Hooker who should have arrived by this time - So we took our way to the Mathematical section, & as we reached there saw the horse Guards driven about, & saw a chariot & drove up which Dr Gray said was the Duke of Argyll with some others - We saw there was some confusion, but knew the Prince was not expected there as he should be at the other end of the town at the Mechanical section - So I moved easily round the crowd to the steps, fearing we were a little late, as one went up the passage the policeman said, "take care those horses will be on you," so I ran hastily up, & looking up saw there were several people at the head of the steps, Dr. H. well the president, the section & some others, & there seemed some confusion, & found I had run up pretty much in Prince Albert's face, for it seemed his attendants had dropped him at the wrong section & I quietly retreated round & into the building as quickly as I could, & there found myself face to face with the Duke of Argyll, who was a curious enquiring of the door-keeper in what direction they should go, so without meaning to, exclaimed "where is the Prince?" - "near whom you wish" - When at length we reached the section we met there Mr. Schell Smith from Lima, whom Dr. Gray had seen before, but whom I had often heard from Dr. Hooker. He was the "last" person with him - A much time was taken up with discussions on matters that we feared we should be too late to hear the paper we wished at the Natural History section, so we came off, & soon after taking our places in the N. H. were joined by Dr. Brown, who was there before us & it was so pleasant to meet a man we had seen before, & one too of so good a friend! - soon there was a little stir & the Prince came in, quite close by us as he passed down the aisle - And some of his suite sat on the empty seats by our side - So then Middleton, at whose house the Prince passed the night, & the Duke of Argyll sat on either side of Dr. Gray, & Lady Middleton & their duchess & Argyll in front of him, & at our side were two of the Prince's attendants - but which two from the ... I never saw them - I had seen them before, & one too of so good a friend! - I could not tell - I speculated a little as to whether the Duchess had ever sat on so ordinary a seat before, for the room was filled with the very simplest of wooden benches & a rail for the back - I think we saw the section's better room at Cambridge in ... the section's rooms - I had another word with the Prince, who listened in a quiet, attentive way for 2 or 3 hours, & then left - Prof. Forbes read a paper before him on certain distributions of ... And I must say I was generally disappointed in the interest of the papers - And thought the manner of delivery & debate will a rather heavy - and the speakers were generally difficult to understand - So after the Prince left,

our General... section... President of the  
Museum where... was to be inaugurated as Patron - Dr. Darwin  
went with him - Mr. Alexander had 4 tickets for the ceremonial, but  
so there was a great demand for them & three men or women ladies in the  
family we did not like to take them - I had instead a ticket to the place  
from at the ~~corner~~ <sup>laying</sup> of the corner stone for the new grammar school -  
at 10 o'clock I said goodbye to my friends, & then left for the section on Chemistry -  
There we came in just as Mr. Darwin & Frenchman was closing a very inter-  
esting communication, & he was the pleasantest speaker we heard, so facetious,  
so easy, & so well - I could more easily follow his French, than many others English -  
then we went to the Geological section, where when a discussion arose on  
the subject we heard read, the name of Russell arose & spoke very well, fluently  
simply & gracefully & I was obliged to leave in the middle, for Mr. Alexander  
came with his daughters to go with me to the laying of the Corner Stone - I had  
as one of the board was admitted within the area, & I had some tickets had  
tickets to the North Hallway, which was crowded with ladies - The stone was  
suspended by pulleys under a canopy of green tawny, flag, &c. not quite so  
pleasant with the picture in the Times, nor was the whole space so large -  
The Prince arrived with his usual punctuality, but as for the ceremony  
we could see nothing for the attendants gathered in a group around so  
as completely in concealment everything I heard the stories of the hammer,  
but I doubt whether anyone but the Prince & the Mayor heard their mutual  
addresses, we could see the back of the Prince's head part of the time, & I  
must say the devout & solemn way in which he listened to the prayer  
contrasted well with the chattering & complimenting which seemed going  
on among some of his suite. It was 11 o'clock, the ceremony, & we  
took his departure for the N. H. amid great cheers - They say he wished  
very much to attend this ceremony, saying he came merely as a father  
than to attend in the Scientific meeting & visit as Prince - but they begged  
his pardon - He & the Queen are essentially punctual - When the Prince  
came he was 1/4 of an hour before his time, & the Mayor had not yet  
arrived upon the field - so they had to keep the train back a few  
minutes until the Mayor for whom messengers were sent in all directions  
should come - He heard about it from Mr. Alexander who was one of the  
council - After the ladies began to thin a little, Anne Alexander was very anxious  
to see the stone - So we made our way through the crowd, such a squeeze  
of hands - Certainly a most uncivil crowd, & uncivil policemen too - The  
stone ran round the stone the ladies had been kissing the stone - At last  
we got out & took our way back towards the town but just as we met a man  
with a bag, "old dach, a penny! a gold watch for a penny!" then came  
a man with a bag of medals "stick in honour of the occasion: only 1 penny!"

Soon came another with "engravings of her Majesty & Prince Albert, a penny each!"  
thence the fair! In the highest style of art! The portrait of the Queen  
must have been an engraving some 10 years ago, for she had on such an  
unworn crown! such looking things as both were, for the highest style of  
art! - He thought the Prince would certainly be gone by the time we reached  
home, but as we were hastening through a side street, first passed came  
the soldiers, then such came the crowd, & I looked the Prince leaning  
back in his carriage & looking out at the windows, so I did not get better than  
with a farewell bow, but drew myself as small as possible into a door way,  
& was much obliged to Mr. Brown who had joined us for warding off some of the  
dirty little boys with his cane. There was quite a party of friends in line -  
Some very pleasant people among them - One a school-master, was an unusually  
sensible strong-minded man, looking at things a little through his own lens  
cular view, and using very powerful English when he spoke. There was  
one sweet young woman with whom I walked a good deal in the streets,  
with garden attached to the house, whether we all repaired after dinner  
The Quaker women impress me as unusually well-educated & sensible  
women - Not so much accomplishments & lighter literatures, but sound in-  
formation - And they seem to take much pains that their children  
shall have every advantage for all literary & particularly scientific pursuits,  
Mr. Alexander has some interesting collections & cabinets - They do not value  
music - But they may learn to draw & as for the dress, I think those soft  
colours & the exquisite neatness, the white silk shawl or little add'l for the  
throat, have something very pleasing in them. And I think people who  
have not much money to spend on dress & who would far better em-  
ploy their time, might save themselves much time, trouble, money &  
trouble by approximating to it - Though I see no reason they should  
keep short waists & large sleeves when all the world beside wear long  
& tight - only the great show & expense in dress I would leave to those who  
have the money to employ others about it, & not with limited means  
therefore so much time as I think we do, or spend money which might  
be so much better used, in imitating a totally different class of people as in  
as wealth, leisure & occupations are concerned. And I wish Mrs. in all  
due sentences & shame. In the Ev. we nearly all repaired once more  
to the Iron Exchange to hear a lecture from Prof. Owen, very interesting - on  
the difference or rather want of difference - between the lower animals  
& reptiles, & a very ingenious comparison drawn - He lectures very well -  
But many things were not so new to me, because I had heard of many of  
these various creatures from Agassiz - And Owen does not I think rival Agassiz as  
an agreeable lecturer. Dr. Harvey joined us there, & his & Dr. Gray's criticisms  
& comments, especially when botanical matters were touched upon, were very  
amusing - More so to me, I fancy though, than to some of their neighbours - They

I did all I could to keep them quiet after the lecture, according to this elegant English custom, Dr. Day got up & laid on the praise thick & strong: "They had never heard such a lecture before, & never would again in their lives!" &c. &c. I thought a phrase Dr. Harvey says some such. Custom gave rise to, very fair - "Pass round the butter-boat!" By the way I was much amused at a little occurrence in one of the lectures, where a traveller or foreigner had occasion to bring in some compliment to the English officials abroad & to the English. The modest creatures applauded most heartily! These scientific men are some of the most green looking creatures, & any remains of any theory of physical beauty & mental development, going together, was most entirely annihilated: - I wanted to write something saucy about them, but Dr. Gray says I must not. Of the official Scientists there, who sat on great rows in the platform, Sir Charles Lyell was decidedly the best looking -

Saturday Dr. Harvey came to join us at breakfast, according to Mrs. A's kind invitation - He with almost all of our circle were to join the Excursion by water, for Excursions were the order of the day - I did not care for the Water party, not loving a boat - And the Land excursions pretty much fell through - Besides Dr. Gray & Strong, he-time was precious, that we had seen enough of science, I were eager to accept a kind invitation we had had from Miss Dawson Turner, Lady Stoddard's father, at Ipswich before we returned to London - So we decided to leave Ipswich Saturday day & Dr. Harvey would join us at Norwich Saturday Ev. After we were packed & before we took our way to the train, Mrs. Alexander accompanied us, with all the children left at home, for a walk - The first walk to see an old gateway. All that remains of a College House founded here, for Ipswich was his birthplace - Then she took us down the new walk, prettily laid out with trees which in a few years will be very fine, upon the pier which separates the dock from the new channel, cut for the river. On our return we went to visit Ransom's artificial stone works - A most curious, interesting process, where by melting flint stones found in great abundance in this neighbourhood, in some other, I think, they shatter a thick glue - This is worked in to fine sand until it has sufficient consistency to mould - It is moulded into cases, figures, tiles, anything you please, & then baked, when it has the consistency & durability of stone - And thus you may get beautiful ornaments & many useful things most cheaply. It was a very interesting process, & we were only sorry the time was so short we could not stop to examine it longer & more minutely - We saw also some ingenious machines for carving & turning Stone. Working out beautifully Gothic traceries! -

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He hurried back for the train, <sup>47</sup> & got there barely in time if it were punctual. But as usual it was very late, so we had to wait, & then took our places for Kew where we proposed passing the day - On our side brought us there - We passed in view of Mountbatten Park where the Prince had staid - A pretentious looking edifice in very light stone - but they say the grounds are very fine - I never saw such quantities of poppies in all my life as in some of the fields - They looked as if scarlet cloth had been spread to dry! - These bright red poppies make such pretty wild flowers! - We reached Kew, & leaving our trunks in the station, walked up to explore the quiet, old town, whose broad, still streets & most interesting remains quite charmed us - The entrance to the Botanic garden is through what is left of the old abbey, afterwards, a nice specimen of old Gothic, & the pretty garden is quite filled with the remains & ruins of the vast old abbey which stood here a little farther on is the church, and at its side a <sup>Saxon</sup> gateway, standing some feet lower than the present level of the soil - It is a large, square tower, most interesting from its age, architecture, & preservation - Behind are some curious remains which have been ingeniously worked into modern dwelling houses, & by judicious selection of shapes in doorways & windows have a queer quaint look - There is another very old & interesting church farther on - ~~The walls were made in 1500 or thereabouts~~ <sup>The walls were made in 1500 or thereabouts</sup> ~~and were built of a fine old chestnut~~ <sup>and were built of a fine old chestnut</sup> - The sexton who showed us this church was quite an original - And introduced us with a remark on a party he had just dismissed - Who, he said, only thanks, which did not pay him for his time! - I have mistaken an hour this morning, & so must write up my letter - I am so busy now with finishing "Light Years" & preparations for going, for we propose leaving New a week from to-day, that writing is difficult - You must all abandon your back sliding -

You must not address any more letters to England after  
the 6th August - After you receive this -

Thanks for Luis, Lizzie's, & Sarah Beach's letters this  
week - And with best love to one & all most particularly  
I am always very affectionately,  
Yours -